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A
BRIEF HISTORY
OF
ST. JOHN'S
Evangelical Lutheran Church,
OF
CABARRUS COUNTY, N. C.,
FROM
ITS EARLIEST SETTLEMENT TO THE PRESENT TIME.
BY
SIDNEY D. STEFFEY,

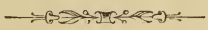
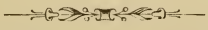
Pastor of St. John's Church.

"Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."—I. Samuel, 7:12.

CONCORD, N. C.:
THE TIMES STEAM BOOK AND JOB PRESSES.
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To
The Memory of
The Members of St. John's Church,
and to
Those Who Are Still Living,
These Pages
Are Respectfully Dedicated
by
the
Author.

This certifies that we have this day examined the MSS. of a Brief History of St. John's E. L. Church, written by our Pastor, Rev. Sidney D. Steffey, and we desire to express our hearty appreciation and approval of the same. We hereby recommend it to the members of our church, and to the people in general, and we hereby authorize the publication of the same.

C. D. BARRINGER,
GEO. E. RITCHIE,
C. M. GOODMAN,

Elders.

JOHN W. CRESS,
W. B. FISHER,
M. L. CLINE,
JOHN D. WALKER,

Deacons.

March 13th, 1899.

Preface.

The author of this little book began the study of the history of St. John's Church for the purpose of knowing better his own people.

It proved so interesting to him that it was thought it might be of interest to others, and so it was decided to publish a *short* history of the congregation from its establishment to the present. It is made up chiefly from the Records of the church, but the author has drawn some from other sources—notably from Bernheim's "History of the German Settlements, and of the Lutheran Church in North and South Carolina," and due acknowledgement is made of the same.

Is this a true Record?

I answer that it is so, so far as it is possible to make it so. Nothing has been written which could not be verified either by the Records, or from some other source.

This book is just what it is said to be, a short, plain history of St. John's Church.

The author is aware of the fact that it is imperfect in many ways, but it is sent out in the hope that it may be of interest to, at least, the members of the Church, and if it should afford the reader any considerable part of the pleasure that its production has afforded the author he will feel amply repaid, for this work has really been "a labor of love."

SIDNEY D. STEFFEY.

St. John's Parsonage, March 13th, 1899.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY HISTORY.

ST. JOHN'S Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cabarrus County, North Carolina, is situated in the eastern part of the county. It is a very old congregation, and very prosperous, being situated in one of the most productive sections of the State.

This part of the country was settled about the year 1750, by Germans from Pennsylvania. As soon as enough people were located in one community they would establish a church and a school for the children. Thus these settlers built their church and school house on Buffalo Creek.

They had only begun to feel that they were about to succeed when they were rudely disturbed by the Revolutionary War. They were very determined in their resistance to British misrule and tyranny, and were both feared and hated by the British and Tories.

Governor Tryon made a strong effort to have them return to their allegiance to the existing government, and for this purpose he made a personal visit to this "hot-bed" of resistance, and while here he enjoyed the hospitality of Capt. John Paul Barringer, who was the recognized leader among the patriots of Mecklenburg County. He seemed to be satisfied that he had sounded the death bell at the funeral of liberty and independence in these parts. This was in 1768.

He went away supposing these Germans were his firm friends, but he was greatly deceived in this, as he had mistaken hospitality for submission.

The war cost them dearly, both in blood and treasure.

They were hunted like beasts, and murdered and robbed by the Tories at home, and they lost many men in battle. One family alone lost seven sons, all slain in battle. This family was named Blackwelder, and no doubt many of the families of the church wept for their dead, who lost their lives in battle or from disease and exposure.

Previous to the year 1792 Cabarrus County was included in Mecklenburg County. The western portion of it was settled by Irish Presbyterians, while the eastern part was settled entirely by Germans from Pennsylvania.

Quite a number of Hessian soldiers deserted from the British army, after the siege of Savannah, and found their way to Dutch Buffalo Creek, and remained there permanently. These partly supplied the loss of the very many young men who had sacrificed their lives during the Revolutionary War. While no regular army passed through their immediate settlement, yet they were harrassed by the Tories. Many settlers were robbed and some were killed, and others taken to prison. Prominent among the latter was John Paul Barringer, who, being too old for the regular service, was surprised and captured in his bed and taken to Camden and held as a prisoner until the close of the war.

The British and Tories hated them with a special hatred, and not without a reason, as they were residents of Mecklenburg county, whose citizens were the first to declare their independence May 20th, 1775.

St. John's congregation was at first known as "Dutch Buffalo Creek Church," because most of its members were located along that stream, and also because their first place of worship was located near the same creek, about three miles east of its present location. The first house of worship was a very plain one, made of unhewn pine logs. It was also used as a school house. It was jointly owned by the Lutherans and German Reforms. They laid off a suitable piece of ground for a graveyard, where repose all that is mortal of many of the early settlers of eastern Cabarrus.

As the congregations increased it was decided to build a house of worship which would accommodate both denominations. This second was no better than the first house, except it was larger. It was situated about one-half mile east of the present building on land now owned by Mr. Martin L. Cline. It seems that this house, or perhaps the location, did not give satisfaction, as it was soon abandoned.

The growth of the congregation was very slow. Although the German settlements in the interior of North Carolina began in 1750 they grew very slowly, owing to the manner in which they were made. They had to come on the overland route in wagons or on foot, from the Province of Pennsylvania. It took many years for them to get enough people together to form a congregation, and even after these were formed they sorely felt the need of a pastor. They would meet on the Lord's day and the school teacher would read a sermon, and he would often officiate at a funeral, and often, in extreme cases, baptize their children. Occasionally a traveling minister came among them and preached for them and administered the sacraments, etc.

Things went on this way until about the year 1771 with St. John's. With this year began the real life of the congregation. Captain John Paul Barringer and others suggested that the Lutherans separate from the German Reforms, and that they build their own church. This was accordingly done, and a site was selected in the present graveyard. Daniel Jarrett was the contractor and Captain Barringer was the only member of the building committee. The church was built chiefly at his own expense, and the congregation had a large pew constructed for the special benefit of himself and family.

With their church completed, and located satisfactorily to all, it was but natural that they should endeavor to secure a pastor to preach the Word to them, instruct their children and administer the sacraments to them regularly. But this was no easy task. There were none to be had in the Caro-

linas, and none could be spared from Pennsylvania. It only remained for them to send to Germany. This they agreed to do. Accordingly, in 1772, Christopher Layrle, from St. John's Church, and Christopher Rintelmann, from Organ Church, were sent as a delegation to Europe for the purpose of applying to the Consistory Council of Hanover, in Germany, for a supply of ministers of the gospel and school teachers for the North Carolina congregations.

They first went to London and then to Hanover, and there obtained the Rev. Adolph Nussmann as their pastor, and Gottfried Arndt as school teacher. They arrived safely in North Carolina in 1773.

These commissioners also secured some donations in money, which was interrupted by the Revolutionary War, but which were eventually paid after a period of more than ten years.

CHAPTER II.

FROM 1774 TO 1794.

IN the year 1774 the Rev. Adolph Nussmann, who since his arrival in North Carolina, had been laboring a little more than a year at Organ Church and in Salisbury, came to St. John's as their first *regular* pastor. He located himself near the church on the farm now owned by Mr. H. C. McAllister.

Pastor Nussmann entered this land in his own name in the year 1783. The original grant is now in the possession of the present owner. The land lies one mile southeast of the church. The first house stood about 200 yards in the rear of the present house, just over the brow of the hill.

Here many meetings of the Council were held looking to the advancement of the interests of the congregation, and here, in this humble home, many plans were devised, in the fertile brain of the devoted minister, for the establishment and the perpetuation of the Redeemer's Kingdom in the wilderness of North Carolina.

Mr. McAllister also owns the first stove used in St. John's church, and has it safely stored away on this farm. It is a quaint affair, and is in a very good state of preservation, considering its great age and the amount of service rendered.

Pastor Nussmann spent the remaining years of his useful life on this farm, and eternity alone will reveal all of the results of the twenty years of labor and sacrifice for this people, and for the Church at large.

About this time the congregation built a schoolhouse, just immediately west of the church, and secured a Mr. Friesland as their teacher.

The house contained two rooms, and had a large chimney in the middle, built of stones, some of which may be seen now. One room was used as a school room, while the other was occupied, as a dwelling, by the teacher and his family.

It is a fact, worthy of note, that from the time the first house of worship was built on Buffalo Creek to the present, St. John's has always had her schoolhouse by the church.

Messrs. Jacob Fegert, Marx Haus and Jacob Thieme paid fifty shillings, that being the legal rate, for one hundred acres of government land, and entered it "in trust for the congregation of Dutch Buffalo Meeting-House."

This tract embraced the land on which the church had already been built, and on which the parsonage now stands. It was a wise foresight on the part of these devoted men. The land is very valuable now, and a source of considerable income to the congregation.

The grant was made on the 22nd of October, 1782.

About this time the congregation adopted a constitution for its government. It is very strict, both in doctrine and discipline. The following facts are gathered :

1. The pastor was bound to confess, with heart and mouth, to the symbolical books of the church.

2. A regular support, for pastor and schoolteacher, was expected from the members.

3. All marriages had to be proclaimed three Sundays, in succession, before the marriage could take place, and no one but a minister was allowed to perform the ceremony.

4. The church council was designated as adjunct executors in all wills and testaments.

The following was the order of service in the church:

1. A hymn of praise.
2. A collect, or the epistle for the day.
3. The principal hymn.
4. Reading of the Scriptures.
5. The creed, or a short Sunday hymn.
6. The sermon.

7. The singing of a few verses.
8. A short catechetical exercise.
9. A long prayer, suitable either to the catechetical lecture, sermon or other circumstances.
10. The benediction.
11. The concluding verse of the principal hymn.
12. The liturgy adopted was the one used in the German Lutheran Court Chapel of St. James, in London, and the Marburg Hymn-book was introduced in the worship of the congregation.

Pastor Nussmann's work at St. John's was much disturbed by the Revolutionary War. Pastor and people were loyal to the American cause, be it said to their honor, and in consequence they suffered many hardships and losses.

Their strong men fell in battle, or rotted in British prisons. They were sorely beset by the Tories, so much so that at one time Pastor Nussmann had to conceal himself in the thickets along Adams Creek from them.

But with the close of the war peace and prosperity came to the church. All of the Lutheranism of the county was centered in St. John's. The pastor's influence was extended, even to other counties. In those early times it was the custom to have but one church centrally located in a county, and the people would come miles and connect themselves with the church, and attend divine service. This made the pastoral work very difficult, but the pastor was more than equal to the task, for he even made missionary tours to Davidson, Guilford, Orange, Stokes and Forsythe counties. Thus did God bless and prosper the church until the death of the pastor.

After the close of the war the want of a better house of worship was felt, when the congregation had again been thoroughly reorganized. On the 6th of November, 1784, a resolution was passed "for the purpose of rebuilding St. John's Church." It was erected on the same site where the old one stood. The following is the preface to the subscrip-

tion: "May the good Lord help us, so that our undertaking may succeed well in peace and unanimity, and that every man may do his part as he would wish others to do towards himself." The subscription ranged from three shillings to ten pounds, and the whole amount gathered was 172½ pounds.

The church was finished the next year, and was solemnly dedicated to the service of the triune God, on the 4th of July, 1785. At the same time a large silver goblet was purchased from the pastor for the use of their communion service.

The church was much larger than any that had been built up to this time, and was a frame structure.

This house was commonly known as the "Old Red Meeting-House," being painted red. It was replaced by the brick building, the walls of which are now standing, in 1846.

General Barringer's elevated pew was transferred to this house, from the old one, and many who are now living remember it well.

An effort was now made to have the church placed, once more, in connection with the Church in Germany, by Rev. Nussmann, and he succeeded. The congregation had money, 90 pounds, on deposit in London, which had been procured by the commissioners who had gone over to Germany for the purpose of securing pastors and teachers for the North Carolina churches, the payment of which had been delayed by the Revolutionary War, and which was well worth looking after.

And besides this, the need of books was greatly felt by the church, and these, in the German language, could only be secured in Europe.

For the consideration of these matters a meeting of the Council was held on the 30th of September, 1787, and the following action taken:

"Resolved, That if this money can be secured, it shall

forever be considered as a fund belonging solely to the church.

“*Resolved*, That from the interest of this fund the yearly salary of the pastor shall be supplemented.

“That no part of the principal shall be used without the consent of the donors.”

Contrary to this resolution, this fund was all used when the new church was built in 1846. It then amounted to about fifteen hundred dollars.

“*Resolved*, That this amount of funds shall not be sent in money, but as the congregation is desirous of obtaining books, it is requested that books, strongly but not expensively bound, be sent over to us.

“*Resolved*, That the chest, in which these books are to sent shall be directed M. C. D. B. C.”

There is a great deal of uncertainty as to what these letters signify, but they probably mean Mecklenburg County, Dutch Buffalo Creek.

It will be seen that it was the intention to sell the books to the members, and thus to supply two wants at once. In both they were successful.

After this the work went on with much success, until the death of Pastor Nussmann, which sad event occurred at his home near the church, on the 3rd day of November, 1794.

Soon after he came to this country he was united in marriage with Barbara, a daughter of Christopher Layrle, one of the commissioners sent to Germany to bring over pastors and teachers. He was the father of several children, and his descendants are still living in this county.

His death was not unexpected, as he had been suffering for quite a while from a cancer on his neck.

He was buried at St. John's. A blue stone marked his grave for many years, but as it was nearly destroyed by the ravages of time, it now safely reposes inside the church, and a new marble slab, the gift of the members of the church, has taken its place at the grave. The inscription on the

old stone is in German. The following is the translation :
“ For me to live is Christ, to die is to gain. The memory
of the righteous is blessed. Here repose the remains of the
faithful preacher, Adolphus Nussmann, born in Germany
August, 1737, died November 3rd, 1794.”

He was aged about 55 years. He was a very scholarly
man and could have graced any position in life, but he chose
to give himself to the establishment of the Lutheran church
in North Carolina, and it certainly seems that he and
Arndt were raised up of God for this special work.

CHAPTER III.

FROM 1794 TO 1821.

AFTER the death of Pastor Nussmann the church remained vacant for two years, after which it was temporarily supplied one year with the labors of Rev. C. A. G. Storch.

On the 20th day of May, 1794, there was held in St. John's church a very important gathering. It was a meeting of all of the Lutheran ministers of North Carolina for the purpose of ordaining the first *English* Lutheran minister in the State. He was Rev. Robert Johnson Miller, who was afterwards a successful worker in the church.

The sad effects of the Revolutionary War were now to be seen everywhere. The morals of the country had been corrupted, and infidelity, and its attendant evils, were abroad in the land. All of the churches suffered, and, of course, St. John's suffered along with all others. These were dark days for the congregation.

The French people had discarded the Bible and its teachings, and had gone mad with "liberty." The same spirit was manifested in America, though not to the same extent. A leading statesman predicted that, in "fifty years, a Bible could not be found in America."

With this period also dates the beginning of Rationalism in the Lutheran Church in America. The true faith was set aside for new and strange doctrine, and the church was torn asunder by divisions and heresies.

At St. John's the members were indifferent to their church vows; they neglected the Sacraments, especially the baptism

of their infants, the attendance on divine worship fell off greatly, and many who came were so boisterous that the doors had to be closed on them, and slanderous reports were freely circulated, and the giving of alms was not observed at all by many of the members.

At last the Council took the matter up, and a meeting was held, and the following action was taken :

1. *Resolved*, That the doors of the church shall no longer be closed before the commencement of the Lord's day services; but as soon as one-half of the congregation shall have been assembled, the doors shall be opened, and at 10 o'clock the services of the sanctuary shall commence; and those persons who shall be guilty of making a disturbance during service shall be reported to the magistrate. The services shall also commence in future without any further calling in of those persons who remain outside.

2. *Resolved*, That at the celebration of the Lord's Supper alms shall be gathered at the door. The members are furthermore requested to celebrate their marriages in the church, at which time of rejoicing they and their benevolent guests are desired to contribute alms to the church, and to lay their mites upon the altar, as is the custom in many places in our Evangelical Church.

3. *Resolved*, That whenever slanderous reports are circulated which might cause dissensions in the church, they shall be made known to our President, Paul Barringer, who shall investigate the matter, and shall decide in such a way as shall best promote the interests of true religion and the church.

4. *Resolved*, That persons bringing their children to the church to be baptized must make the fact known before service, name the sponsors, the day of the child's birth, the names of the parents, so that it may be recorded in the church book.

The following members of the Council were present at this meeting: Paul Barringer, Peter Quillman, George Meisenheimer, Daniel Jarrett, Matthew Meyer, Nicholas Reitenhauer, Jacob Fegert, Andreas Stauch, Ulrich Durr, and Jacob Bast.

And the end of Rev. Storch's first year as a supply pastor, and three years after Nussman's death, the congregation called Rev. Adam Nicholas Marcard, who was laboring at Cold Water Creek Church. He came to St. John's in 1797 and remained until some time in the year 1800. The congregation made some progress under his administration, and he seems to have been careful, and it is greatly to his credit to say that he kept a faithful record. He removed to South Carolina.

As the church was now vacant again, Rev. C. A. G. Storch was again called, this time as a regular pastor. He continued as pastor of the church for twenty-one years. He was a faithful pastor, and his labors here were blessed of God in the strengthening of the church and the salvation of many souls.

It was during the first years of his pastorate here that the great revivals of 1800 and 1801 swept over the country. The infidelity of the preceding years gave place to something akin to religious fanaticism.

This was the beginning of revivals in this country, and I will let Pastor Storch describe them in his own words. In a letter dated February 25th, 1803, he writes :

“By the side of this pestilence (infidelity) there prevails now, for over a year, a something, I know not what to name it, and I should not like to say fanaticism. Christians of every denomination assemble themselves in the forest, numbering four, six and sometimes ten thousand persons; they erect tents, sing, pray and preach, day and night, for five, six and eight days. I have been an eye-witness to scenes in such large assemblies, which I cannot explain. I beheld young and old, feeble and strong, white and black—in short, people of every age, position and circumstances, as though they were struck by lightning, speechless and motionless; and, when they had somewhat recovered, they could be heard shrieking bitterly and supplicating God for mercy and grace.

“After they had thus spent three, and even more, hours

they rose up, praised God, and commenced to pray in such a manner as they never were wont to do, exhorting sinners to come to Jesus, etc. Many of those who were thus exercised, were ungodly persons before, and we can now discover a remarkable change in them. Even deists have been brought to confess Christ in this way. Thus this thing continues even to this hour.

“Opinions are various in regard to it; many, even ministers, denominate it the work of the devil; others again would explain it in a natural way, or in accordance with some physical law: whilst others look on it as the work of God.”

I also quote from Rev. Paul Henkel on the same subject as follows:

“Towards the close of the year 1801, there occurred a mighty waking up of religion among the English people in Guilford and Orange counties, which caused our German people to understand the true worth of the gospel. Both the pastors and their people were surprised, for it appeared exceedingly strange to those, who were well acquainted with the order of salvation, that true conversion should consist in such a way as declared by these people; that true faith should originate in such sermons, which caused such corporal convulsions, such representations of the devil, death and hell; the fearful and awful expressions of lightning, thunder, hail, fire and brimstone against the sinner, deprived many of their senses, and prostrated them in fainting fits.

“As the like proceedings were upheld and defended by so many English preachers, and as many had declared, that by means of such workings they had received the true and reliable witness of the pardon of their sins, and of the new birth, many of us hesitated to contradict such proceedings, although they were thought so contrary to the doctrines of the gospel. Many passages of Scripture were pointed out as opposed to those outward manifestations; but many good meaning persons defended them as scriptural, whereupon

the important questions arose among them: 'Must we not also experience the same thing in order to be saved?' The people became anxious and concerned, were much affected and distressed, pressed upon their pastors to decide the matter for them, who were unwilling to do this without due consideration and the fullest assurance."

Thus it will be seen that this spirit of revivalism was in all of the churches. It was entirely new in America, and to the Germans in Europe, but was to be found in England and Ireland previous to this.

While it is true that the pastor of St. John's never, for a moment, countenanced the movement, yet it had a sad effect on the congregation. Gradually, however, they came back to the teaching of the fathers, and it was not long until they were settled in "the old paths."

The territory occupied by the church was large, and as Pastor Storch's health was bad, and especially as he was almost blind, he resigned in 1803.

Rev. John Henkel, from Virginia, came and preached several sermons for the congregation, which pleased the people very much indeed, and they extended him a call to become their pastor. He accepted the call and went back to Virginia after his family, but God called him to his eternal rest. This was sad news to them, as ministers were not easily had in those days.

It only remained for Rev. Storch to assume the pastorate once more, and, in his afflicted condition, do the best he could for the congregation, which he did to the entire satisfaction of all of the members.

The succeeding years brought great prosperity to the church. In 1806 it was said to be the strongest congregation in North Carolina.

In 1806 St. John's church saw the first of the many congregations which have gone out from her to establish church homes for themselves go out. This was Bethel, Stanly County. The members of this church had nearly all been

members at St. John's before Bear Creek was established.

During the remaining years of Pastor Storch's labors there is nothing of interest to record, except the slow but steady growth and development of the congregation along all lines.

After the organization of the North Carolina Synod in 1803 there was new life infused into all of the churches. As the years went by the love of the people increased for their pastor. But as he was scarcely able to stand up long enough to preach a sermon, his resignation was reluctantly accepted in 1821.

At the spring communion in 1821, there were 77 persons to be confirmed, and the aged pastor, who was not able to stand, took his seat in the altar, and gave them and the entire congregation his parting blessing. It was a scene never to be forgotten. So ended the labors at St. John's of one of her most successful pastors. He died in 1831, and is buried at Organ church. His is the longest pastorate in the history of the church, and he was very probably the the most successful of all the pastors of this church, unless we except Rev. Nussmann.

CHAPTER IV.

FROM 1821 TO 1857.

THE church now extended a call to Rev. Daniel Scherer, who accepted, and entered upon his duties at once. The following churches composed the charge at this time: St. John's, Organ, Irish Settlement, now Lutheran Chapel, Union, Crooked Creek, now St. Peters, and Bear Creek, now Bethel.

Several years previous to this, the North Carolina Synod passed a resolution recommending that the pastors instruct the slaves, and that the churches provide a suitable place for them to hear the gospel preached, and that they receive the communion. About this time this was made effective at St. John's. From this time up to the emancipation of the slaves there is a "Roll of Colored Members" on the church book.

Pastor Scherer was a wise and prudent worker, and the congregation was very prosperous during his incumbency.

About the year 1830 many of the members removed to the West, particularly to Illinois, there to form new homes in the wilderness, and Rev. Scherer felt that it was his duty to accompany them, and to look after the interests of the Lutheran Church in this new field. He therefore resigned in 1832, after ten years of acceptable service to the church. It may be of interest to the reader to know that he succeeded in establishing, in 1834, at Hillsboro, Illinois, the first Lutheran church in the State.

Rev. Henry Graeber was called as pastor of the church in

1832, and at once began the work. He was a native of Pennsylvania, but of late years had been preaching in Lincoln and Rowan Counties, N. C. He was also a practicing physician.

Shortly after he came to St. John's a second wave of "revivalism" swept through the churches. The North Carolina Synod never, in all of its history of nearly 100 years, has followed any of the "new methods," but on the contrary she has always catechised her children, yet many of her churches felt the effects of "this strange fire."

The system was introduced by Rev. Daniel Jenkins, from Maryland, in 1835. It reached all churches and all classes of people. Finally, the crowds were so large that they could not be accommodated in the churches, and they began to worship in tents, or "arbors." One of these was built, eventually, within the bounds of St. John's congregation, where now stands a church of another denomination. Dr. Bernheim says that "many of the churches were revived to death!"

From this time dates the establishment of the "camp-meeting," which often continued for two or three weeks. Nevertheless, St. John's did not get far from her moorings, as Pastor Graeber was a faithful servant of the church. For more than eleven years did this man of God go "out and in before this people," and did what he could to "strengthen the things that remained," and God blessed the labor of his hands in the building up of the church greatly.

In the year 1837, St. Stephen's congregation was organized. It is located about nine miles northeast of St. John's, and most of the charter members had belonged here. This was the second church which was organized from the membership of St. John's church.

Nothing remains to be recorded except a faithful performance of duty. Pastor Graeber resigned in 1842, and much regret was expressed by the congregation.

They were now vacant for a period of two years. A call

was then extended to Rev. John D. Scheck, of Salisbury, N. C., but who had lately been laboring in South Carolina. He came to St. John's in 1844, and remained until 1857. His was a most successful work here. The thirteen years which he spent here were years of real progress. No divisions, of any moment, disturbed the church or hindered the spiritual growth. Large classes were catechised and confirmed each year. The pastor's fame spread abroad, and his influence increased, and it was soon seen that the house was too small to accommodate the large number of people who attended the services on the Lord's day. They were at that time worshipping in the "Old Red Meeting-House," which, when it was built in 1785, was the best house of worship in the county. It was reasonably large, and indeed a very comfortable building. It was a frame structure, and constructed from the best material to be had at that time. After the new house was completed the material of the old house was sold to private parties. The frame is in the dwelling now owned and occupied by Mr. H. H. Blackwelder, and some of the other material—notable weather boarding—is to be found on the dwelling house of Mr. S. M. Ritchie.

This house stood in the middle of the graveyard, and after it was torn away the ground on which it stood was all utilized for burying purposes.

The schoolhouse, too, long since has yielded to the tooth of time, and a little debris from the stone chimney only remains to mark the place where it stood. Mr. Martin S. Ludwig taught the last session of school here, and many of his former pupils are still living.

Pastor Scheck and his people very wisely decided to make the new church both large and substantial. The people did a large part of the work with their own hands, and besides this, they gave liberally of their means towards the other expenses, and as a result the church, when finished, was the largest and best in this part of the State at that time.

The fund which had been secured in Europe in 1772, and which now amounted to \$1500, was used at this time towards defraying the expense of this building.

The house was commenced in 1845. The walls are still standing. The brick were made on the land belonging to the congregation, near where the church stands, just to the north, and the labor was performed by the members. The dimensions of the building are eighty by fifty-five feet. It was located not far from the western wall of the graveyard, on the outside. The pulpit was in the west end, with a gallery in the east end, and it was supposed to comfortably seat six hundred people.

When the corner-stone was laid there was gathered next to the largest crowd which has ever met at this church. The people came from a great distance, and the service was very impressive. A Bible, hymn book, various papers and writings, and several five dollar gold pieces were put into the vault, and then all of the brick masons present, assisted by the members, built up the wall over it as high as they could reach before they went home. The work went steadily on until the church was completed, "for the people had a mind to work." It was their intention to make it durable and comfortable rather than fine, and in this they succeeded admirably.

At length the house was finished, and the date set for the dedication was the 22nd day of August, 1846. There was present on this occasion the largest crowd ever assembled here. Pastor Scheck and as many of the people as could find room assembled in the old church, while many others waited on the outside. They formally bid adieu to the old church, and then, the pastor leading, all solemnly marched into the new church, which, after a suitable sermon, was dedicated to God.

This house was used, without many alterations, for more than forty years, and the walls are still standing, and to all appearances are none the worse for their fifty-three years service.

For many years after this the church was very prosperous, gathering in new material each year, and her influence was greater than it had ever been.

The German language was gradually giving place to the English, especially among the young people. The language which was used by the early settlers was not, however, pure German, but what is commonly called "Pennsylvania Dutch." At first it was the only language used, but it has almost entirely disappeared to-day. There are only ten or a dozen members, all very old people, who can speak it now, and probably as many more who can understand it, but cannot speak it at all.

Pastor Scheck continued in the love and confidence of his people until 1857, when he offered his resignation. It was accepted promptly, as it has always been the rule, and is yet, to accept all resignations offered by pastors or any of the officers. Some pastors have a way of resigning to "test their popularity," but this congregation has always discouraged such a course by accepting.

Pastor Scheck removed to Alamance County, N. C. He had been at St. John's thirteen years.

The congregation was now vacant, and remained so for one year, during which they lost some ground, as these vacancies, though they are of short duration, are exceedingly disastrous in their effects. They were supplied, however, by the neighboring ministers with occasional services until they secured a pastor in 1858.

CHAPTER V.

FROM 1857 TO 1876.

IN the year 1858 the congregation extended a call to the Rev. G. D. Bernheim, of Charleston, S. C., who accepted, and entered upon his duties at once. He preached a pure doctrine, and did much to keep the church "in the old paths" during these troublous times, for the Civil War was drawing near, and the existing conditions, both in church and state, were being disturbed as never before.

The year of 1858 is noted as the great revival year of the century. A wave of religious enthusiasm spread over the entire country, and it is estimated that 58,000 persons connected themselves with the different churches in the United States that year, over and above the normal increase.

In the year 1858 Pastor Bernheim confirmed 80 persons. This large confirmation was followed by a special revival at St. John's. This was probably the largest meeting of this kind ever held here. The excitement was intense, and the people were thoroughly aroused. At some of these meetings the people would encamp near the church, and for this purpose some had houses built near the church for temporary habitation, while others lived in tents. This encampment was near the church to the southeast.

Then the war spirit was abroad. Preparation was being made for the coming conflict of arms, and big "musters" were being held, and the people were disturbed and excited. However, the conditions at St. John's were more favorable than might have been expected under such circumstances. The Word was preached and the sacraments administered regularly, and the church made progress.

Since about 1835 the congregation had service twice each month, instead of only once, as had been the custom when there were several congregations in the charge. One of these was preached in English and the other in German.

For sometime St. John's and Bear Creek, or Bethel, constituted a charge, and, as they had no parsonage, the pastor usually lived at Mt. Pleasant, and furnished his own house. Pastor Scheck lived there in his own house, built by himself. The house is now occupied by Captain Jonas Cook. So when Pastor Bernheim came there was felt the need of a parsonage, and the two congregations proceeded to build a house at once.

The joint Council met on the 23rd of January, 1858, and appointed a committee to draw up a plan and to estimate the cost of the proposed house, consisting of Pastor Bernheim, Matthew Petrea and A. Blackwelder.

A building committee was also appointed, as follows : Daniel Barrier, N. H. Barringer and Jacob A Fisher.

The following members were appointed to secure the funds : John A. Troutman, J. M. Harkey, Josiah Litaker and Harris Cress.

The question of the location now came before the churches, and it was a matter of sharp contention at St. John's. Those members who lived in and near Mt. Pleasant wanted it there, while those who lived near to and beyond the church, on the other side, wanted it located at the church. A special congregational meeting was held, at which the matter was decided. It was agreed that only those members who had subscribed to the building fund should have a vote. Pastor Bernheim made a lengthy address on the subject, and there was great interest manifested by both sides. When the vote was taken it stood: Mt. Pleasant 47, St. John's 42. It was accordingly located at Mt. Pleasant, and soon completed. It was a very good house, and was occupied by the successive pastors for a number of years. It is now occupied by Mrs. Dreher.

This is the first parsonage ever owned by the congregation, and was disposed of, when the present one was built, while Rev. Petrea was pastor.

In 1849 an effort was made to have services three Sundays in each month by the congregation. And it really seemed just that they should have three-fourths of the time, as they were paying three-fourths of the salary. This, of course, was opposed by Bethel, and it was the occasion of a sharp contest. It was finally decided as follows: "That the first Sunday be considered the disputed Sunday, and that it be divided between the two churches." This meant two Sundays of each month for St. John's and three Sundays of each alternate month. It was not long, however, before three regular Sundays were secured.

It was 30 years yet before the congregation was able to make the necessary arrangements to have preaching every Lord's day. This arrangement was effected in 1888 by Pastor Keller.

Pastor Bernheim kept the church book in good order, making all necessary entries.

The book then in use was about full, and the pastor, in 1858, purchased in Charleston, S. C., the book now in use by the congregation.

Pastor Bernheim remained only two years at St. John's, as he resigned in August, 1859, and removed to Mt. Pleasant, N. C., and became the financial agent of North Carolina College.

As the congregation was vacant again a call was immediately extended to Rev. J. B. Anthony, of Lovettsville, Virginia. He began work at once, some time in the year 1860. He is known as "our war preacher," among the people even yet, as he was here during the entire time the war lasted, and even some time after, leaving in 1867.

These were the darkest days in the history of the congregation, not even excepting the perilous times of the Revolutionary War. These Germans and their descendants are

now, and have always been, intensely patriotic. They bore their share of the suffering, losses and ruin of the war. At first the church saw her young men go to the front. Many a parent gave the son a Bible and a parting blessing, and added, with tears, "Go, my son, fight for your country, and if needs be, die in her defense!" And they went, and a few returned in four years, and many of them found a soldier's honored grave.

Thus was the church deprived of her young men, and the families were in distress and sorrow. Those who had hoped that the war would be of short duration were disappointed at the end of the first year to find that the war had only really begun in earnest, and that the lives sacrificed up to this time were but a prelude to the greater loss of life and limb, and suffering, and destruction of property, for the next three years.

Recruits were called out to take the place of the killed and disabled. New regiments were formed as long as a volunteer was to be had, and then governmental machinery was put in motion to compel them to go, taking the strong men of middle life, and so none were left except old men and boys. And finally these were called out too, and the women were left to care for themselves and the little ones alone. And St. John's bore her full share of all.

During all these years Pastor Anthony was faithful to the church. He labored for a very small salary, because there were few to do anything. All of the trials and the suffering and the losses of these four years will never be disclosed until the final day of reckoning.

At last the war was over, and there was the home coming. Fresh from the battlefield, from the foul prisons of the North, and from the different posts of duty, these honored soldiers came back. But not all! Nor will these ever come, for they sleep on many a battlefield, in many a hospital graveyard!

And those who came back found a great change. There

was no money, and food was scarce, and poverty seemed to be everywhere. Added to this was the doubt and uncertainty in regard to the government. The negroes, who were intoxicated with their new "freedom," were a source of annoyance, and there was a feeling of unrest and dissatisfaction everywhere.

As if these things were not enough, we must yet add the general demoralizing influence which follows every war. But the pastor gathered the people together again, and it was not long before the congregation began to show signs of renewed life and activity. The two years next following the close of the war were very prosperous. Many were added to the church, and the pastor was more popular with the people than ever. He had been with them in their darkest days, and they showed their appreciation in many ways.

Pastor Anthony resigned in 1867, and went to South Carolina. He was very popular with the people. He at one time was a minister in the Methodist church, and had been very successful.

The church now extended a call to Rev. L. C. Groseclose, a native of Virginia. He accepted, and entered upon his duties in May, 1867.

The congregation had by this time partially recovered from the effects of the war. Still, the spiritual life of the members was at a low ebb, but they only needed to be aroused to a fuller sense of duty. The first work of the new pastor was intended to remedy this effect, and he was wonderfully successful.

Then great material prosperity came to the people, as cotton was grown, at this time, at a great profit. Their property was speedily recovered, and a spirit of benevolence was awakened among the members. But there remained much to be done yet. The Sunday School, even, had been discontinued for several years, on account of lack of interest.

In December, 1867, the congregation was asked for a contribution for the "erection and endowment of a Theologi-

cal Seminary in the South." The collection was taken on the second Sunday in this month, and amounted to \$170. Also, on the 30th day of December, 1867, the Book of Worship was introduced in the congregation, and was received with great joy by the people.

Pastor Groseclose believed in the "protracted meeting," and held them in his church, some of which last several weeks. One of these was held in December of this year, and lasted twenty-two days, during which nine ministers preached 44 sermons. Recorded in the church book is the result, as follows: "There were in all about 70 conversions, nearly all of whom were members of the church."

Pastor Groseclose continued to hold these meetings each year while he was here, but with him, in 1872, passed the "protracted meeting," as none are recorded after this date.

It seems, from the record of 1869 and 1870, that the church made little, if any, progress during these years. No members were received, and the pastor says: "The efforts of the people to raise cotton and make money were so strenuous that the spiritual condition has rather declined."

Several sermons were preached on this subject, and as a result quite a number of the members became offended. The pastor was at the point of leaving, but the matter was arranged, and he remained.

At Easter, in the spring of 1871, the service was very long, as there was communion on that day and also quite a number of children to be baptized. The Council requested that hereafter on such occasions the liturgical part of the service be omitted. This did not meet with the approbation of the pastor, who reported the action of the Council to the Conference at Ebenezer April 28th.

On the 29th a resolution was passed "requesting the Council of St. John's church not to require their minister to violate a plain duty."

It is safe to add that this incident did not increase his popularity with his people.

The year 1871 was a very prosperous year for the congregation. The spiritual life of the people was improved, and 51 new members were received into the church.

Pastor Groseclose was a devoted man, and did a good work here, and still holds a high place in the estimation of the people. He resigned in January, 1872, and is now living in Kansas.

During his pastorate two new congregations were organized from the membership of St. John's.

Mt. Herman, located 9 miles southwest of St. John's church, was organized in 1868.

Also in the same year Holy Trinity congregation was organized in the Chapel of North Carolina College, Mt. Pleasant. Their house of worship was built five years later. Both of these are the direct offspring of St. John's church.

The congregation was vacant only a short time until a call was extended to Rev. D. M. Henkel.

He came in 1872 and remained until some time in 1875, making his pastorate here about two and one-half years.

During this time nothing of any importance occurred in the church. Scarcely any entries were made in the church book, and it is presumed that the church was fairly prosperous. It is doubtful whether his temper and feelings were such as would make him the successful pastor of a congregation such as this is.

The bond, never too strong, between pastor and people was severed in 1875, and he removed to another field of labor.

A short vacancy did not improve matters any, and so the year 1876 did not find the congregation in a very good condition.

CHAPTER VI.

FROM 1876 TO THE PRESENT (1899).

THE congregation now extended a call to Rev. R. W. Petrea, a native of Rowan County, N. C., who had just finished his second year at the Theological Seminary. He accepted and entered upon his duties at once. The church was on the decline at this time, and it seems that it took the new pastor some time to get hold of the work.

One source of trouble was that the rents from the farm belonging to the church had been paid on the pastor's salary contrary to the wishes of a part of the congregation.

Another was that the officers, at least a part of them, had been in office for many years, and the management of the affairs of the church was continually in the same hands.

Then there was no system of rotation in office, but the officers were elected "for life or good behavior."

Yet another was the lack of system in raising the necessary funds for defraying the expenses of the church, including the pastor's salary.

Just at this time the liquor question was brought to the attention of the authorities of the church.

All of these problems required the attention of the Council, and it was acknowledged by all to be a very critical period in the history of the church.

Some of these questions were settled in a very satisfactory way soon, while others required time.

In regard to the money from the rents of the farm, it was decided to pay this "on back salary hereafter." There was a considerable amount due in this way, and by giving notes

of the Council for the amount due, it was hoped eventually to pay all.

But the congregation was getting more in debt each year, and it was decided to try a new plan. Accordingly an assessment was made upon each member along with their usual subscriptions to the pastor's salary. Each male member was assessed \$1.50, and each female member 75 cents. This was never enforced, and little good came of it. The question was not finally settled until ten years afterward, when this plan was amended and enforced.

In the year 1879 the congregation very wisely decided that it would be to their advantage to have their pastor live in their midst instead of at Mt. Pleasant. They accordingly sold their interest in the parsonage there to the Bethel congregation, and immediately took steps to build one for themselves.

Mr. Archibald Cline was the Treasurer of the congregation at this time, and the financial part was largely managed by him. Mr. Matthew Petrea was the chairman of the building committee, and Mr. W. W. Safrit was the contractor.

The new parsonage was located 92 yards west of the church. It is a frame structure, built of good material, and the work is of a good quality also. The house contains 7 rooms, and is partly furnished by the church. Besides the dwelling they also erected all other necessary buildings, such as stables, etc.

The parsonage is a very comfortable one, and is kept in splendid repair, a new coat of paint having been applied lately. Like the church it is large and well arranged, and the people are justly proud of both.

It is easy to see now that it would have been better for the church here, and probably for Bethel too, if the other house had been located here in 1857.

In 1878 Mt. Olive congregation was organized directly from the membership of St. John's. They built a house of

worship 4 miles northeast of St. John's church, and the mother congregation was very active in assisting them in every way to be comfortably situated in their new home. Mr. Isaac Beaver was the leading spirit in the new organization, and much of the success of the enterprise was due to his efforts.

Soon after this Pastor Petrea began to preach in a school-house in Rimer, $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles north of St. John's, and in a short time a congregation was organized here under the name of Prosperity. A new church was built, and the congregation was soon firmly established in their new home.

About this time the congregation was asked to contribute something for the Lutheran Mission at Richmond, Va. A sermon was preached and the offering was gathered and amounted to \$150. St. John's has always responded to all of the demands of the general work in the matter of Christian giving.

At this time, 1879, "some of the members objected to the pastor's administrations," according to the record, and there was a good deal of confusion in the church. The pastor talked of resigning, and some of the deacons did resign their places in the Council. Happily the matter was adjusted and the pastor decided to remain.

In regard to the liquor question it was resolved by the Council: "That every member found guilty of intoxication shall be dealt with according to the discipline of our church." This was ordered to be read from the pulpit on the next Lord's day.

However, beginning with 1880 the conditions improved. The finances were somewhat improved, and the pastor was exceedingly popular with the people, and the spiritual condition of the members was greatly improved, the spirit of benevolence was increased, and there were signs of prosperity in all of the different lines of church work. Large classes were catechised and confirmed, and the Word was

preached with power, and had its effect. The church was freed from debt, and the pastor's salary was increased.

The relation of the present congregation at Cold Water to St. John's is somewhat peculiar. This new organization was effected in 1881 largely from the membership of St. John's, but the grounds are among the very oldest church grounds in this part of the country. The German Reform congregation here had a pastor in 1768 named Suther.

In the year 1814 a Lutheran organization was effected and in 1843 this was removed to Concord and assumed the name of St. James.

The Reforms did not thrive at Cold Water, and ere long there was no organization there.

So this new Cold Water is largely made up from the membership of St. John's.

May 15th, 1882, the roll of membership was gone over carefully by the Council and all of the names of parties who had no legal right to the same were removed from the roll. More than one hundred names were thus removed.

For several years the progress of the church was not disturbed in any way except at one time, and this was caused by the sickness of the pastor, who was not able to attend to his duties for some time.

The congregation was working under a Constitution which served well the purpose in other days, but which was clearly behind the times.

It was decided to make an effort to secure one in accordance with the requirements of the church. As it was the beginning of the reforms of the last ten or more years which have so modernized the congregation as to give it its present strength and power, I will give it in full. It has been amended several times since it was first adopted, and I give it in its amended form as follows :

CONSTITUTION OF ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH.

ARTICLE I.

NAME AND OFFICERS OF THE CONGREGATION.

SECTION 1. The name of the congregation shall be St. John's E. L. Church.

SEC. 2. The officers of this congregation are: (a) Three trustees, (b) four Elders, (c) four Deacons—which constitute the Church Council.

SEC. 3. The Pastor is *ex-officio* President of the Church Council.

SEC. 4. The Church Council elects out of their midst one Vice President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer.

SEC. 5. A majority of the members of the Church Council constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

SEC. 6. Members of the Church Council, whose time of office has expired, are immediately re-eligible.

ARTICLE II.

THE DUTIES AND PRIVILEGES OF THE OFFICERS.

SECTION 1. It is the duty of the Trustees conscientiously to take charge of and protect all the property of the congregation.

SEC. 2. It is the duty of the Elders with the pastor, to promote, according to their utmost ability, discipline and order, peace and harmony, in the congregation, as well as to assist into carrying into effect all measures of the Church Council and Congregation, and in the absence of the pastor conduct divine worship.

SEC. 3. The duty of the Deacons consists in collecting all dues of the church, taking up Sunday's collections, and to hand over all moneys thus collected to the Treasurer, and take his receipt for the same; besides, to provide the elements for the Lord's Supper and to take charge of the sacramental vessels.

SEC. 4. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Church Council and the Congregation. In case when the congregation is without a pastor, or the pastor be absent, or

should decline to act as chairman, then the Vice-President is to take his place. Should the latter be absent, or decline to preside, then the congregation shall elect a President *pro tempore*.

SEC. 5. The Secretary shall keep a faithful record of all the proceedings of the Church Council and Congregation, and preserve all documents of the congregation carefully. He shall immediately, after the opening of each session, read the minutes of the preceding meeting distinctly and audibly, and, after they are confirmed, record them in a book provided for that purpose. Should he be unable or unwilling to attend any meeting, he shall hand the minutes of the preceding meeting to the presiding officer in due time, so that he may appoint a Secretary *pro tempore*. Whenever the Secretary shall go out of office, he shall hand over to his successor all papers, books and documents belonging to the congregation, and take his receipt for the same.

SEC. 6. The Treasurer shall receive and administer all funds coming into his hands for the benefit of the congregation, out of which he is to pay all bills that have been approved by the signature of the Vice-President or Secretary. When the term of his office has expired, he shall deliver all moneys and receipts to his successor, and take his receipt for the same.

SEC. 7. The pastor's duty is to preach at his regular appointments and festival days, whenever this is practical; he shall take charge of the Church Record-Book, and make all entries therein of his ministerial acts. He shall visit the sick, instruct the catechumens, and administer the sacraments; in short, he shall faithfully and conscientiously discharge all the duties of an Evangelical Lutheran minister. He shall be a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of North Carolina, so that, in case of a neglect of duty on his part, he can be brought to account for the same.

ARTICLE III.

OF THE MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION.

SECTION 1. Whoever has been baptized and confirmed in an Evangelical Protestant Church can become a member of this church, by conforming to its constitution and rules. All confirmed members of the Lutheran Church can become members of this congregation, by a letter of honorable dis-

mission from the congregation to which they belonged at the time.

SEC. 2. Each member is in duty bound to contribute, according to his utmost ability, to the continued existence of the congregation ; the minimum, or least amount, shall be for males \$1.50 yearly, and \$1.00 yearly for females, and 25 cents per hundred on personal property and real estate.

SEC. 3. All members in good standing, who contribute to the support of the congregation, shall have the privilege of voting, but only male members are eligible to office in the congregation.

SEC. 4. Whoever voluntarily disconnects himself from this church, to become a member of another congregation, or should he be expelled by the Church Council on account of immoral conduct, forfeits all his rights of membership.

ARTICLE IV.

OF THE PROPERTY OF THE CONGREGATION.

SECTION 1. We regard the following as the property of the congregation : The church, with all its books and furniture ; the parsonage and other immovable and movable articles that have been procured in the name of the congregation ; as, also, all funds in the hands of the Treasurer, and capital invested on the congregation's account.

SEC. 2. All the property of the congregation is, and remains forever, indivisible.

ARTICLE V.

OF THE MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION AND CHURCH COUNCIL.

SECTION 1. The congregational meeting takes place once every year in the month of August, and on such a day as shall be determined by the President ; or, in case of absence or refusal, by the Vice-President. Special meetings shall be called whenever twenty-five (25) voting members, specifying the object, shall request, in writing, the Church Council so to do.

SEC. 2. All congregational meetings must be announced publicly in the church, at least two weeks previous, specifying the object for which they shall be held.

SEC. 3. The congregation receives the annual report of

the Treasurer, and appoints a committee out of its membership to examine the same.

SEC. 4. The Church Council shall assemble itself on the first Monday in January of each year. All special meetings subject to the call of the President of the Council.

SEC. 5. It shall be the duty of the Church Council to fix the salary of the pastor annually, and to see that the salary of the present year be settled with the pastor before entering upon the duties of the coming year.

ARTICLE VI.

OF ELECTIONS IN GENERAL, AND PARTICULARLY OF THE ELECTION AND CALL OF A PASTOR.

SECTION 1. All elections shall be held by ballot.

SEC. 2. A majority of the votes of the members present, and entitled to the privilege of voting, shall be necessary to constitute a valid election.

SEC. 3. At an election for a pastor, an exception shall so far be made in the above regulation, that also such members who are unavoidably absent on account of sickness, shall have the right to send in their votes at the appointed time, subscribed by their own hand, inclosed in a sealed envelope, and directed to the holders of the election.

SEC. 4. The pastor, elected as above, is to receive a written call from the Secretary, in the name and by the authority of the congregation, and is in duty bound, should he accept the call, to signify his acceptance of it in writing.

SEC. 5. The election and call of a pastor extend to an indefinite period of time. However, if the pastor wishes to resign his office, he must give the congregation six months' notice through the Church Council. The same time of notice must be observed by the congregation, should it desire to dismiss its pastor.

SEC. 6. All congregational elections must be published by the Church Council to the congregation at least two weeks before the election.

SEC. 7. At elections for members of the Church Council, the existing council shall nominate twice as many persons as are to be elected, and the congregation may nominate half as many more, from whom the officers may be chosen.

ARTICLE VII.

WAYS AND MEANS OF RAISING FUNDS.

SECTION 1. This department of devising ways and means for raising funds shall be committed to the Council.

SEC. 2. No member shall be excused from contributing to the support of the church, except such as are in indigent circumstances, of which the Church Council shall be the judge.

SEC. 3. All dues to the Church Treasury shall be collected semi-annually ; hence, arrangements must be made that the Treasurer shall have the necessary funds in hand before the salaries are due.

ARTICLE VIII.

STANDING COMMITTEES.

SECTION 1. At the regular meeting of the Church Council, held on the first Monday of January of each year, the President shall appoint the following committees, who are required to serve for one year:

SEC. 2. Committee on Music, consisting of three members, who are to see to it that the organ will be played regularly, that the corps of choir singers will be kept up, and shall suggest to the Church Council such purchases, alterations, and repairs of importance, as are necessary in the musical department.

SEC. 3. Committee on Relief, consisting of the Pastor and two Deacons, to whom all applications of indigent communing members for aid must be made, whose duty it shall be to make provision for the speedy relief of our worthy poor members.

SEC. 4. All cases of discipline are committed into the hands of Pastor and Elders of the church; and it is left optional with them to determine whether it is prudent to make their decision publicly known or not.

SEC. 5. The office of Sexton shall be let out to the lowest bidder, at the regular congregational meeting in August of each year.

SEC. 6. The Deacons shall also report semi-annually, and shall bring to the notice of the Church Council any delinquency on the part of the members in the payment of their dues.

SEC. 7. All the transactions of these various committees

must be reported at the next regular meeting of the Church Council, and be subject to the ratification or rejection of the same.

ARTICLE IX.

ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR THE CHURCH COUNCIL.

SECTION 1. The meeting shall be opened with prayer.

SEC. 2. The Secretary shall call the roll, and note the absentees.

SEC. 3. The minutes of the previous meeting shall then be read, and, if found correct, adopted.

SEC. 4. The Secretary shall read the name of such members as have been added to and taken from the church since the last meeting.

SEC. 5. The various Standing Committees, in order, shall be called upon to report, and their reports be acted upon.

SEC. 6. All letters, documents, petitions, etc., intended for the Council shall then be read and acted upon.

SEC. 7. Other business unfinished at the last meeting shall now be taken up and transacted.

SEC. 8. Resolutions, if any, may then be offered for adoption.

SEC. 9. Suggestions of committees or of members may be proposed as items of business.

SEC. 10. The members of the Council may, at the close of their business, converse on the welfare and prosperity of the church.

SEC. 11. At all called or special meetings of the Council the use of this order of business may be omitted, and only such business be transacted as that for which the special meeting was called.

CONCLUSION.

SECTION 1. The pastor, as well as all members of the congregation, pledge themselves conscientiously to observe and sustain all the articles of this Constitution.

SEC. 2. The congregation reserves the right, at any of its meetings, to add By-Laws to this Constitution, or to make amendments to the same, whenever two-thirds of the voting members present shall declare themselves in favor of such additions or amendments.

SEC. 3. Neither shall there ever be any rules or by-laws

adopted which shall not be in strict harmony and conformity with the symbolical books of our Evangelical Lutheran Church, as enumerated and declared at this time in the doctrinal basis of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and Ministerium of North Carolina.

Respectfully submitted,

M. A. LUDWICK,
C. D. BARRINGER,
GEO. H. CLINE,
R. W. PETREA,

Committee.

For several years after this the congregation made steady progress. The church was developed in many ways, and Pastor Petrea did his work faithfully. However, in the year 1887 he resigned, but remained until the congregation had secured another pastor. The new pastor was present when Pastor Petrea preached his last sermon, and a large congregation was present, and many regrets were expressed at the pastor's leaving. It was a sad service indeed, and he went away with the prayers of the people. He had been at St. John's a little over eleven years. He is now in Nebraska.

Rev. S. L. Keller, just out of the Seminary, became pastor in 1887. He was young and filled with a zeal to do something for the Master, and at once went about the work of the church in earnest.

Several things of considerable importance occurred during his pastorate.

Up to this time the congregation had services only on three Sundays in the month. Several times an effort had been made to have the pastor give his whole time to the congregation, but it was always defeated. Another one was now made, and this time it was successful. No one to-day doubts but this was a very wise movement.

While the congregation had always contributed liberally towards all benevolent objects, yet there was no regular offering given in the sanctuary at each time. This was proposed in 1887, and at once became a part of the regular Sunday service.

The following entry appears in the church book :

"It was spoken of in our Council, and at length carried to Conference, and then decided that no certificate should be given to members dismissing them from the Evangelical Lutheran church to that of any other denomination. *This resolution was carried out.*"

At this time, 1888, the Common Service was introduced in the congregation. There was a great deal of opposition to its use by a large part of the members, and it became the source of strong contention. It was used in its entirety in spite of all opposition. There is a goodly number here now who oppose it, and as a result it has only been used in part since 1890.

In 1888 it was decided to remodel the church building. The entire interior part was re-arranged, and in fact it was made to be a modern church in every respect. The gallery was entirely removed and the pulpit was placed in the east end instead of the west, and the doors on the sides were closed, one large door of entry being made in the west end. A partition in each end made it possible to have a vestibule, a library room, a Sunday School room for the infant department, and cloak room, etc.

The furniture is of the best, and is the handiwork of Mr. Matthew Petrea, who in his day was one of the best cabinet makers in this part of the State. It is made of walnut, and besides that which is stationary there are tables, a reading desk and a baptismal font.

A good organ, chairs, etc, complete the furnishing of the house.

More than \$500 was expended before the house was ready for re-dedication, which joyous event occurred on the 10th day of February, 1889. A large crowd was present, and the sermon was preached by Pastor Keller from Hab. 2 : 19, 20.

In the year 1889 the North Carolina Synod met at St. Johns, on the 3rd day of May. This was a notable meeting of the Synod, as action was had on two very important mat-

ters. One of these was the organization of the "Alpha Colored Lutheran Synod of North Carolina."

This organization was effected in the Sunday School Library Room, and it probably would have resulted in much good but for the untimely death of one of the leading ministers in the new movement.

But the one that had the most direct bearing on the congregation was the resolutions of instruction to the delegates to the United Synod, which met in Wilmington, N. C., in November of that year. There were those in the North Carolina Synod at that time who could not agree on what is commonly known as the "Four Points."

The matter was discussed in the presence of the congregation, both pro and con, and it was a revelation to most of the laity.

The instructions were given to the delegates, and the Synod adjourned, but there were some points of difference yet to be reconciled in the congregation. An effort had already been made to introduce the pastoral robe, but it was defeated by a very decided voice of the people.

In the course of a short time the congregation, with a very few exceptions, had come to the publicly declared position of the North Carolina Synod.

But there was not that unanimity of feeling that had once existed, and as some were not entirely satisfied with the management of affairs while the church was rebuilding, the pastor offered his resignation at the end of two years. It was accepted and he removed to South Carolina.

The congregation was in a very prosperous condition and many methods had been introduced during the past two years which proved to be of lasting benefit.

Pastor Keller, during his administration here was happily married to Miss Lizzie Miller, who was a member of the congregation and had been reared here. He was pastor a little over two years.

In October, 1890, a call was extended to Rev. Peter Mil-

ler, of Wardensville, West Virginia. He accepted the call, and at once began the work of the pastorate. He was a man of decided convictions and did a good work at St. John's. For the great part of the time he had the care of a sick wife, but the Lord called her home while here, and he after that labored under the burden of grief also. A little grandchild also fell asleep in Jesus, and in all of these things the pastor had the prayers and sympathies of his people.

The first matter that claimed the attention of the Council at this time was that of the finances of the church.

As regards the finances, the present prosperous condition of the same is a result of the action taken at this time. It was very simple—only the enforcement of the previous legislation on the subject. At first there was a good deal of opposition but it has lessened each year until it has well nigh spent itself. The assessment plan at this time brings in ample funds for the salary, etc., and is no longer an issue in the church.

At this time the congregation settled another question which had been before the church for a long time. This was in regard to the rotation of the officers of the church, including the Trustees. It was decided to declare all of the offices vacant, and then the congregation proceeded to elect as follows: An Elder and a Deacon for one year, and also one of each for two, three and four years. This leaves an Elder and a Deacon to be elected each year. The same plan was put into operation with reference to the three Trustees. At first it was opposed by quite a number of the members, but the wisdom of the plan has long since been demonstrated, and the people all feel now that it has settled a question which had vexed the church for many years. From this time dates the real progress of the congregation, but it took some time for the people to become reconciled to the new order of things.

About this time there was some opposition manifested towards the pastor from another source, and this, along with

those who did not like the new methods introduced by Pastor Miller, and also some who had become dissatisfied before he came, seemed to make a considerable party of opposition, and the pastor decided to resign. This course was opposed by the Council, but the resignation was presented and accepted at the end of the third year.

Much of the work of Pastor Miller was such as will tell for good in the congregation. He was a devoted man, who did acceptable work for the congregation, and all were real sorry when he left. He went back to West Virginia.

A call was now extended to Rev. J. Q. Wertz, who was preaching at Union church, in Rowan County. He accepted and entered upon his duties in January, 1894.

Pastor Wertz was soon in the midst of his work, and it was not long before he was very popular among the people. His pastorate was of short duration, however, as he resigned in March, 1896, in order to accept a call to China Grove, N. C. The people were very sorry indeed to see him go, as his resignation had been quite a surprise to the people.

During the two years of his pastorate nothing of any special importance occurred in the congregation. The church was seemingly prosperous, and many who had not attended service at the church for quite a while now became regular attendants, and the Word was preached to large congregation each Sunday.

In the autumn of 1895 the congregation at the suggestion of Pastor Wertz erected a nice little building in the yard at the parsonage to be used as a study for the pastor.

Pastor Wertz held each year a week's continuous service in the month of August. This was a very wise step, and has proved of great benefit to the church. It has become a fixture of the church, and the credit for the conception of the plan belongs to Pastor Wertz.

In May, 1896, a call was extended to the present pastor, the writer, who was at that time pastor of a mission at Blue Ridge Springs, Virginia. The call was accepted and he has

been laboring here since that time, and with what success it is best to let others testify. It does not become me to speak of my labors in this congregation, as all realize that man at best is but a weak vessel in the hands of God for the accomplishment of good, to whom belongs all the honor and praise. Whatever good has been done or whatever mistakes have been made are so fresh in the minds of the people that they need not be repeated here.

CHAPTER VII.

SUNDAY SCHOOL, PRAYER MEETING, AND OTHER SOCIETIES OF THE CHURCH.

ST. JOHN'S has always had all of the different auxiliary societies which are usually to be found in a progressive congregation. Some experiments have been made in this line which have proved to be only failures, but mention of these unimportant things need not be made here.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

It is impossible to know, at this late day, the exact date of the organization of the first Sunday School in this congregation. It is safe to say that it was very early in the history of the congregation, and it is very strange that no record was made of this important event. The Sunday School was in successful operation in 1832, and how, when, and under what particular circumstances it was organized will never be known, as this knowledge passed from earth with those who did the work.

At first there were several Sunday Schools in the congregation, one at the church, and a number scattered throughout the bounds of the congregation. In fact this was still the case in 1849, and some of these schools were the foundation of some of the congregations which have gone out from St. John's.

The Sunday School at first differed but little from the day school, except some of the older pupils read the Scriptures, and an effort was made to explain the different passages as they were read, while, of course, there were prayers,

singing, etc. Some of the children were taught their letters and others carried a spelling book, and many learned to read in this way who had no other opportunity of doing it. But it was a beginning in the right direction, and God blessed the efforts which were made for the salvation of the young, and as the years went by new methods were introduced, and reforms brought about until we have the splendid organization of to-day.

It is impossible to give a detailed history of the Sunday School through all of its existence, as the records are lost, but let it suffice to say that from its organization up to 1860 the work was pressed with more or less energy and vigor, in the summer season at least, for at that time no one ever thought of having Sunday School in the winter.

During the war between the States the whole work of the church was demoralized, and the Sunday School was discontinued for a number of years. Even after the close of the war, when everything was yet unsettled, and the spiritual life of the church was still at a low ebb, no attempt was made to reopen the school for several years.

In 1867 Pastor Groseclose organized it, and it has steadily gone forward since that time. Instead of holding its sessions only in summer time, as had been the custom for a time, the school now meets each Lord's day in the year. In it the children are taught to know and to love the Savior, and the spirit of benevolence is being cultivated among them, and a contribution is made by nearly every member each Sunday for this purpose. All modern appliances are used, and the school numbers among its pupils all of the children and young people of the church, and many of the older people, some of the latter being among those who are interested in the study of the Word, and the most prompt in attendance.

The School possesses a very good Library. There are several hundred volumes in it, and while some of the books are old, quite a number are new, and altogether they make

a very interesting collection. Recently quite a number of volumes have been added to it. The present enrollment is 277, and the School was probably never more prosperous than at this time.

THE PRAYER MEETING.

The Prayer-Meeting is older than the congregation as an organization, and was in successful operation several years before the first house of worship was built, for before they had a regular house of worship they would meet in some private house, and have a prayer and song service, and then when the house was built, and no pastor could be had, they gathered regularly at the church and were edified by a prayer service. At such times a sermon would sometimes be read by the school-teacher, or by one of the old men in the church. And when at length they secured a pastor, the prayer service was held during the 30 minutes preceding the preaching hour.

With or without a pastor, in summer and in winter, these services were never disturbed until the opening of the civil war. Like the Sunday School, it went down under the force of the shock of that terrible war, and for quite a number of years no prayer meetings were held at St. John's, and like the Sunday School too, it was reorganized in 1867.

The Council, in this year, passed the following resolution: "That the 30 minutes preceding the preaching service be devoted to prayer." Since then it has continued to the present, under different names perhaps, but always the same in objects sought to be achieved. St. John's has always been a church of prayer, and now there are many signs that are encouraging to those who desire to see the young and old mingle their voices together, and raise their prayers to a throne of mercy in behalf of saint and sinner.

For more than 130 years devout worshippers have rendered their praises to God here in the prayer meeting. May this spirit never die!

THE WOMAN'S HOME AND FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

St. John's Church has always fostered and encouraged the spirit of Missions. Itself a mission of the church in Germany, and during this time having learned how blessed it is to receive, being often destitute of the means of grace herself, she has learned to appreciate these blessings, and she has now for more than a hundred years shown her appreciation of these things by extending these blessings to others less fortunate than herself. No church has ever gone out from her but that she has helped them to secure a house of worship, and many others have been the recipients of her bounty. Besides this she has always contributed her full share towards defraying the expenses of our missions, both Home and Foreign, and has helped to fill the requirements of benevolence in the Synod to which she belongs.

In the year 1885 the women of the congregation were organized for the purpose of promoting missions and the spirit of missions among the people.

The organization was effected in April 1885, and Mrs. R. W. Petrea became the first President. It has prospered as much as could have been expected by its most sanguine friends. It has raised from \$50 to \$100 each year, and is as prosperous to-day as it has ever been. The present membership is 48, and the performance of their duty seems to be a pleasure to the members. The society receives the direct contributions of many members of the church, and is the embodiment of the spirit of missions in the congregation.

THE LUTHER LEAGUE.

This is a society for the special benefit of the younger members of the church. Benevolence is encouraged, the members are exercised in the performance of the public duties of church members, and the Word is studied with care, and in a systematic way. The League was organized in February, 1895, and the pastor, Rev. J. Q. Wertz, was

elected as the first President. It started out with 75 members which is about the number to-day.

While these organizations have been fostered and encouraged, still they are not allowed to take the place of the church. They may be "auxiliaries" indeed, as their name implies, but the word of God is, and has always been, recognized alone as "the power of God unto salvation."

The League has been of considerable benefit to the congregation, and it has become one of the arms of strength and assistance of the church in promoting the Redeemer's Kingdom.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE GRAVEYARD.

WHEN the congregation built their house of worship on the banks of Buffalo Creek, they set apart a plot of ground for a graveyard. The land here was very well suited for the purpose, and the ground on every side of the church was occupied, leaving the church in the middle, as was the custom in that day. There are quite a number of graves here, as this house was used by both the Lutherans and German Reforms for a considerable time. Here sleep many of the early settlers, and the spot is made sacred by the association of much that pertains to the early history of this section.

There is a monument standing on the site of the old church, in the midst of the burying ground. It is the gift of the people whose ancestors worshiped here many years ago, and who now lie buried at this place. It is a square marble shaft, about ten feet high, and is lettered on three sides as follows :

South side : "Sacred to the memory of those members of the Lutheran and German Reform churches, who were buried here prior to 1750."

North side : "This land was donated by Edmond Foil, a member of the German Reform church, to St. John's, Holy Trinity, and Mt. Olive E. L. churches, and Bethel German Reform church."

West side : "Erected November, 1894."

The labor involved in building this monument was performed by Pastor Wertz.

For some unknown reason they decided, after some years, on a new location for their church; and it was then moved to the second location, about one-half mile east of the present church, and the dead were buried there as long as the congregation worshipped in this house. This was only a few years, and consequently there were but few graves here. But I have no doubt that there were some. This was intended to be the permanent location of the church, and it was the custom to bury at the church, and it is almost certain that death claimed some, even if the time was short. At present there are no marks of any graves, as the land is all under cultivation, but the oldest people here all agree that the site has been called "the old graveyard" as far back as they can remember.

The entire history of the graveyard at this place has been lost to man, and who, and how many, sleep here will never be known until God shall wake up the sleeping dead everywhere.

In 1771 the church was removed to within a very short distance of where it now stands, and again the dead were buried near the church.

The land is very well suited for the purpose here. It is somewhat elevated, and there is a gradual slope toward the east. With the exception of one small corner, the clay is nice and smooth, and is free from rocks and even gravel.

At first the dead were buried without any special order, except that an effort was made to keep families together, and all were placed as near the church as possible. At length a certain piece of ground was set aside as the graveyard proper, and was enclosed by a wooden fence.

This first burying ground was just east of the church, and in the course of years it was seen that it would be necessary to enlarge it, as it was nearly full of graves. It was extended towards the west, which left the church near the middle, as this new extension was somewhat larger than the original part. The new part was enclosed with a stone wall

along with the other part in 1847. At first it was decided to extend the graveyard west of the church, and three graves were made at the northwest corner of the church. Afterward, when it was decided to make the extension just west of the original part, these bodies were removed just inside the gate of the old graveyard. They were daughters of Mr. Paul Bost, and died from fever, all near each other in 1847.

An effort was made to observe some order in this part, but it was not long before bodies were buried in the driveways, and soon only one of these driveways remained open, extending from west to east in the middle of the upper half.

These stones were gathered from the surrounding country by the members of the church. This part contains $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres, and the wall is so built that it took four horses to haul enough at one time to build two feet of the fence. This was a considerable undertaking, and shows that the people spared no pains or labor in surrounding their graveyard with a fence that was once beautiful and lasting.

The large black stones, covered with moss, standing as silent sentinels of the dead, are in keeping with the marks of more than one hundred years, which alone remain to tell the passerby that this one lived and died.

There is a silent voice which speaks to every one who walks amid these stones. Here on this slab is carved a broken bud, "aged 2 years." Here is a hand holding an open Bible, with a finger pointing upward—"Gone Home," "aged 75 years," and another "aged 90 years," etc.

For more than a century the hopes, and joys, and sorrows, of this community have been carefully placed underneath these clods, and the place has been made sacred to the mourners who have wept for the dear treasures, held here in "in God's acre" until they shall hear His voice and "arise and shine!"

There are 3505 graves, by actual count, that can be seen, and, no doubt, there are many others either never marked or the stones having fallen down, have been entirely removed.

What an army! The living congregation is as nothing compared to those who sleep within the sacred dust of St. John's graveyard!

There are no fine monuments here. The best one, I am told, cost \$500, while the majority are marble slabs, and are made to endure, and are not put up merely for show. Some of the oldest are of blue slate, and some are even made from the heart of the pine tree, and covered with paint, and these have withstood the summer's heat and winter's cold of many years.

Many of the oldest inscriptions are in German, and the words, "Born in Germany," are very common.

In the eastern part there are two of special interest. One of these is that of Father Nussmann. The original stone has been taken away and placed within the church, and a new marble slab has taken its place at the grave. It is fitting that he should rest here, as his life work was done principally among this people.

Another one, near this one, marks the grave of Rev. Jacob W. Barrier. He is one of the only two ministers who have ever been reared in St. John's church, the other being Rev. D. M. Blackwelder, who is still living in Pennsylvania. He was educated at North Carolina College, and died at Enochville, N. C.

The following is the inscription on the stone :

"In memory of Rev. Jacob W. Barrier. Died July 20th, 1867, aged 26 years, 9 mos. and 6 days.

"Rev. xiv:13, 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceworth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors.'"

The monument is above the average height, and is well kept by the relatives and friends.

Near the western wall stands that of Rev. W. Artz, with the following inscription :

"Rev. William Artz, born June 1st, 1804, died April 19th, 1886, aged 71 years, 10 mos. and 18 days."

“Text: I. Peter v. ch. and 4th verse, ‘And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.’”

“Erected August 6th, 1889, by the Evan. Lutheran Synod of N. C.”

The slab also contains the obituary of his wife, which is as follows:

“Sarah, wife of Rev. William Artz. Born October 4th, 1806. Died September 20th, 1867, aged 60 years, 11 mos. and 16 days. Text: II. Cor. v. ch. and 6th verse.”

These three are the only ministers buried here.

In the year 1896 the congregation took steps to enlarge the graveyard a second time. A committee was appointed to lay off in lots, suitable in size for each family, all of the land lying between the wall on the west side and the church, and also some land lying between the wall on the south side and the road. This was done, and in January, 1897, the congregation met and removed the wall from the west end, and placed it in connection with the upper ends of the north and south walls. This left the entire west end open, and in the spring of 1898 the congregation placed a first-class iron fence at this end at a cost of \$150.

There are now 15 graves in this new part, which contains seven-eighths of an acre, and along with the old part there is enclosed three and five-twenty-fourth acres. The grounds are very well kept. Recently all of the monuments have been secured in their places.

“Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.”

CHAPTER IX.

SUMMARY—CONCLUSION.

WE have now briefly traced the history of the congregation from its beginning to the present time. A summary of the most important events may be of some interest to the reader in this connection.

The first German settlement was made in eastern Cabarrus, then Mecklenburg County, in the year 1750. These people came from the Province of Pennsylvania, and at the close of the Revolutionary War were reinforced by a goodly number of Hessian soldiers who had deserted from the British army. These found homes and protection among their German brethren who had been true to American liberty from the beginning.

Their first religious services were held in private houses, and consisted in prayers, songs, etc.

After some years a rude house was built of pine logs on the banks of Buffalo Creek, and the congregation received the name of "Dutch Buffalo Creek Meeting-House." The house was also used as a school house, and they worshipped here for a number of years, and here the first graves were made in this section. The site is now marked by a marble shaft erected in November, 1884.

For some unknown reason, but probably because of the house not being located near enough the centre of the congregation, it was decided to remove to a new location. A site was chosen one-half mile east of the present house, and here the *second* house was erected. This house was also built from unhewn pine logs, and was but little larger and in no

wise better than the former. Both were jointly owned by the Lutherans and the German Reforms.

Here some graves were made also, but this location was not satisfactory to a part of the members, and it resulted in a serious division of the church.

In the year 1771 Captain John Paul Barringer and others advised the congregation to separate themselves from their German Reform brethren, and to build a house of their own on a new location, and also to build a school house, and most important of all, to make an effort to get a regular pastor. This was acted upon, and a site was chosen in the midst of the present graveyard, and a school house was built near by.

This *third* house was larger and better than any which had been built up to this time, and was built chiefly at Captain Barringer's expense. An elevated pew was placed in this house for his especial benefit, and was transferred to the new house in 1785.

Previous to this time they had worshipped without an ordained minister. The school teacher would read a sermon on Sunday, and in extreme cases would baptize their children.

As no minister could be had in America, it was decided to send to Europe for a pastor and school teacher.

Christopher Layrle, of St. John's, and Christopher Rintelman, of Organ, were sent to Germany for this purpose. They succeeded in getting Rev. Adolphus Nussmann as pastor, and Mr. J. G. Arndt as school teacher.

Besides, these Commissioners secured, by donation, a certain sum of money, which was all finally secured in 1785, and was of great help to the congregation up to 1846, when the last of the fund—\$1500—was used in the building of the brick church.

Messrs. Nussmann and Arndt arrived in America in 1773, and both located at Organ Church.

In the meantime St. John's had their school room completed, and secured a Mr. Friesland as teacher.

At the end of one year, in 1774, Rev. Nussmann came to St. John's as their first regular pastor. He secured a farm by a grant from the government, and lived and died at St. John's.

The dark days of the Revolutionary War were now being passed, and they were sorely pressed to keep up even the semblance of a church until the close of the war. The church farm had been secured, and it was now certain that this would be the permanent location of the church.

In 1785 the people decided "to rebuild St. John's Church," and a new frame house was erected on the same ground which the old one had occupied. This was a good building, and as it was painted red, it received the name of the "Old Red Meeting House."

After the death of Pastor Nussmann in 1794, Rev. C. A. G. Storch served as supply pastor for one year. Then Rev. Adam N. Marcard was pastor for three years, after which Rev. Storch was called as their regular pastor and continued to serve until 1821.

In the years 1800 and 1801 revivals were introduced in the American Lutheran churches. They created a great deal of confusion, and our people did not become quiet again for a number of years after this.

Pastor Storch resigned, however, in 1803 on account of ill health, and Rev. John Henkel, of Virginia, was called. But he died in the midst of his preparations for removing to St. John's, and Rev. Storch was called again to take up the work.

In 1821 Rev. Daniel Scherer came as their pastor, and remained until 1832, when he removed to Illinois. He was succeeded by Rev. Henry Graeber, who remained until 1842.

In 1835 the second wave of "revivalism" swept over the country. This was the beginning of tent meetings, arbor meetings, etc.

Rev. John D. Scheck was called in 1844, and remained

until 1857. The new brick church was erected by him in 1846.

Rev. G. D. Bernheim was pastor from 1858 to 1860.

In 1859 the first parsonage was built at Mt. Pleasant.

Rev. J. B. Anthony was pastor from 1860 to 1867. These were the darkest days of the church, and Pastor Anthony was the instrument in God's hands of doing much good during these dark days in "strengthening the things which remained and which were ready to die."

Rev. L. C. Groseclose served from 1867 to 1872, and was the last of the "revival" pastors.

Rev. D. M. Henkel from 1872 to some time in 1875, and Rev. R. W. Petrea from 1876 to 1887.

From this time on the history is so fresh in the minds of all that it need not be gone over again in detail. But let us be more specific in this summary.

The following table will show who the successive pastors were, and the time of service of each :

Rev. Adolphus Nussmann, from 1774 to 1794, 20 years.

Rev. C. A. G. Storch, from 1796 to 1797, 1 year.

Rev. Adam N. Marcand, from 1797 to 1800, 3 years.

Rev. C. A. G. Storch, from 1800 to 1821, 21 years.

Rev. Daniel Scherer, from 1822 to 1831, $9\frac{1}{2}$ years.

Rev. Henry Graeber, from 1832 to 1843, $11\frac{1}{2}$ years.

Rev. John D. Scheck, from 1844 to 1857, $13\frac{1}{2}$ years.

Rev. G. D. Bernheim, from 1858 to 1860, 2 years.

Rev. J. B. Anthony, from 1860 to 1867, 7 years.

Rev. L. C. Groseclose, from 1867 to 1872, 5 years.

Rev. D. M. Henkel, from 1872 to 1875, $2\frac{1}{2}$ years.

Rev. R. W. Petrea, from 1876 to 1887, $11\frac{3}{4}$ years.

Rev. S. L. Keller, from 1887 to 1890, $2\frac{1}{2}$ years.

Rev. Peter Miller, from 1890 to 1893, 3 years.

Rev. J. Q. Wertz, from 1894 to 1896, $2\frac{1}{4}$ years.

Rev. S. D. Steffey, from 1896 to (March) 1899, $2\frac{3}{4}$ years.

It will be seen from the above table that from the time Rev. Nussmann assumed charge of the congregation in 1774

to the present—125 years—the congregation has had 15 different pastors. These 15 pastors have served the congregations 119 years, leaving only 6 years to be divided between the different vacancies, none of which have been very long, and most of which have been filled by supply preaching.

Rev. Storch has the distinction of serving the congregation longest, 21 years, as a regular pastor, and one year as a supply, and is also the only man who was ever called a second time, he having been called three times in all.

The list of successive pastors of St. John's is an honored one, and one can only feel proud to be numbered among them.

As to doctrine, St. John's has always been soundly Lutheran. She required her first pastors to "confess by mouth and heart to the symbolical books of the church," and from that time to the present she has never let the "fire die in the altar" of biblical Lutheranism. From the establishment of the congregation until the year 1800 the children were catechised according to the methods of the mother church in Germany. Then for several years this plan was in disfavor with the people at large, but it was never entirely abandoned. By the year 1810 the congregation had gotten back again to the old paths, and there was no further discussion of the subject until 1835, when the "new methods" were introduced by Rev. Jenkins, from Maryland. For twenty-five years both of these methods was employed by the different pastors.

From 1860 to 1872 the revival method was used exclusively, and from that time the former has been used exclusively. But at no time has the church been far from the "good old way." All efforts towards either extreme have failed, and her doctrinal position has always been directly in accord with the North Carolina Synod, of which body she has been a member since its organization in 1803.

In the early days the territory of the congregation was very large indeed. In 1771 many people traveled twenty-

five miles to church, but as the years went by, the country was more thickly settled, and new congregations were established; this territory was gradually contracted until the present bounds were reached. But strange to say that as her territory was diminished, and as new congregations were organized directly from her membership, still her own strength at home has steadily increased until to-day her membership is greater than ever before and her influence more extended.

It is now four miles to the eastern limits of her territory, three and one-half to the western, four to the northern and seven to the southern. Her present membership is 300, and there is a steady growth along all lines of churchly life.

The money necessary for the local expenses of the church, such as pastor's salary, etc., is raised by what is known as the "Assessment Plan." Each male member is taxed \$1.50 and each female member \$1.00, and besides this they are required to pay 25 cents on each \$100 worth of property of which they are possessed. This is the minimum amount asked for, and each one is allowed to contribute as much as they desire. The plan gives satisfaction. The entire expenses of the congregation last year was \$1009.

She has always been liberal in her contributions to the Synod, and has taken care of her own sick and helpless ones, and has also contributed toward the support of the church at other places.

The following churches and educational institutions have received financial aid from her: Bethel, St. Stephens, Mt. Herman, Holy Trinity, Mt. Pleasant, St. Marks, Charlotte: the first Lutheran Church of Richmond, Va.; Mt. Olive, Prosperity, Cold Water, Mission at Stauner, Nebraska; Immanuel, and also the "Theological Seminary of the South;" North Carolina College and Mt. Amœna Seminary.

The following churches have been organized from her membership: Bethel, St. Stephens, Mt. Hermon, Holy

Trinity, Mt. Olive, Prosperity, and the new Cold Water congregation.

Also an effort is now being made to build a house of worship seven miles south of St. John's, in which it is hoped to organize a congregation in the near future. The house is well under way, and it is hoped soon to organize the *eighth* congregation from the material of old St. John's. And this is not all, as many of her children are honored members of other Lutheran churches in this and also in many other States. Though old in years, she is not enfeebled, and her "strength has been renewed like the eagle's." God has been in the midst of her, and has signally blessed her, and she closes this century with brighter prospects than she has ever had before.

May this brief history inspire our people with a greater respect for their dear old church, and may they transmit to a future generation an heritage as glorious as that which they received at the hands of their fathers. And what a heritage it is! May we all be inspired by it to greater things for God and His church, and may St. John's never be weaker than she is to-day!

"A glorious church, without spot or wrinkle."



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